

Practice being assertive

The following pages will guide you through the completion of a five-step process that will help you:

- Look carefully at a problem you are currently having
- Create a plan for addressing it in an assertive and healthy way

Step 1: Define the problem

A) Defining the problem clearly and thoroughly is the first step in assertive communication. Write a description of a situation in which you would like to behave more assertively for each of the prompts below.

WHO is involved:

WHEN it took place:

WHAT bothers you about the situation:

HOW you have acted so far:

Step 2: Evaluate your rights

It can be helpful to think about what you deserve. Select each of the rights that apply to this situation:

- Ask for what I want
- Be angry at someone I love
- Be happy
- Be healthier than those around me if I choose
- Be myself
- Be playful
- Be treated in a way that is not abusive
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Change and grow
- Change my mind
- Determine my own priorities
- Expect honesty from others
- Express all of my feelings, positive or negative, in a calm, respectful way
- Feel scared and say "I'm afraid"
- Follow my own values and standards
- Have my needs and wants respected by others
- Make friends and be comfortable around people
- Make mistakes and not have to be perfect
- My own needs for personal space and time
- Not to be responsible for others' behavior, actions, feelings, or problems
- Not to give excuses or reasons for my behavior
- Say "I don't know" when I am unsure
- Say no to anything when I feel I am not ready, it is unsafe, or it violates my values
- Say no to requests or demands that I can't meet

Step 3: Decide what you want

In every situation there are many goals. If you're not sure what you want, it can help to talk to someone you trust. Write about your goals for each of the prompts.

WHAT do you really want?

HOW do you want other people to feel about you after the conversation?

HOW do you want to feel about yourself after the conversation?

Step 4: Decide what to say

It's important to think through ahead of time exactly how you will communicate your needs and/or desires. Take a moment to think about this now. Then write your communication plan in the space provided.

WHAT do you really want?

- State the problem in terms of consequences to you. Stick to the facts and avoid blaming others.
- Express your feelings. Tell the other person how their behavior affects you.
- Make your request. State what you want clearly and concisely.
- Explain the consequences respectfully. What will happen if the other person does not comply with your request?

How you will assert yourself:

Step 5: Choose a time

Choosing a specific time to talk makes it less likely that you will put off the conversation you want to have. Decide on a date and a time when you would like to address this issue:

Date: _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

Time: _____ : _____ _____
Hour Minute AM/PM

